

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 2 are pending in the present application. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Prior to filing the present response, Applicant hoped to conduct a teleconference with Examiner Gesesse. However, during the period that Applicant hoped to conduct the teleconference, the Examiner was on a leave of absence from the Office, and as such, was not available for the teleconference. Applicant respectfully requests that upon return to the Office, the Examiner please contact Applicant's attorney to schedule the teleconference.

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,993,317 to Belsak, Jr. (hereinafter "the Belsak, Jr. patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,973,087 to Fong (hereinafter "the Fong patent"), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,032,020 to Cook et al. (hereinafter "the Cook et al. patent"). Applicant is traversing this rejection.

Claim 1 provides for a system that includes, *inter alia*, a first repeater, a second repeater, a third repeater and a fourth repeater that are coupled to a wire that is common to said first, second, third and fourth repeaters. The first repeater and the second repeater communicate with each other via said wire. The second repeater and the third repeater communicate with each other via said wire. The third repeater and said fourth repeater communicate with each other via said wire.

The Belsak, Jr. patent discloses a system using two or more conductors and implementing repeaters on different conductors so that the distance between adjacent repeaters on any one conductor is greatly extended (col. 2, lines 40 – 44). For example, the Belsak, Jr. patent, with reference to FIG. 3, describes a power line L1 that comprises three separate phase lines P1, P2 and P3, with an arrangement of repeaters 71, 72, 73, 74, 75 and 76 distributed thereon (col. 6, lines 4 - 46). Repeater 71 is implemented on phase line P1 (col. 6, lines 46 – 47). Repeater 72

receives signals from receiver 71 via a wireless link 102, and transmits signals S2 over phase line P2 (col. 6, lines 47 – 50). Signals are further communicated (a) from repeater 72 to repeater 73, via phase line P2, (b) from repeater 73 to repeater 74 via a wireless link 104, (c) from repeater 74 to repeater 75, via phase line P3, and (d) from repeater 75 to repeater 76, via a wireless link 106 (col. 6, lines 50 – 55). The Belsak, Jr. refers to this arrangement as “phase line hopping” (col. 6, line 57).

The Office Action, on page 4, recognizes that the Belsak, Jr. patent does not expressly teach a wire that is common to said first, second, third and fourth repeaters. However, whereas the Belsak, Jr. patent expressly teaches an arrangement requiring two or more conductors and implementing repeaters on different conductors, the Belsak, Jr. teaches away from a wire that is common to said first, second, third and fourth repeaters, wherein the first repeater and the second repeater communicate with each other **via said wire**, the second repeater and the third repeater communicate with each other **via said wire**, and the third repeater and said fourth repeater communicate with each other **via said wire**, as recited in claim 1.

Moreover, if system in the Belsak, Jr. patent was modified so that its repeaters were coupled to a common wire rather than being implement on different conductors, such a modification would change the principle of operation of the Belsak, Jr. patent.

Whereas the Belsak, Jr. patent teaches away from the recital of claim 1, and whereas an implementation of repeaters on a common wire would change the principle of operation of the Belsak, Jr. patent, the Belsak, Jr. patent, whether being considered alone or in combination with another reference, **cannot be cited in a section 103(a) rejection of claim 1**. Thus, claim 1 is patentable over the cited combination of the Belsak, Jr, Fong and Cook et al. patents.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1. By virtue of this dependence, claim 2 is also patentable over the cited combination of references.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 1 and 2.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims presented in this application patentably distinguish over the prior art. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and that this application be passed to allowance.

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Date

Respectfully submitted,

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